

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner averred that “the inventions listed as Groups A-C do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons.” The inventions are drawn to a product, a process of making the product, and an apparatus for making the product.” See page 2 of the Office Action. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant respectfully submits that PCT Rule 13 permits combinations of different categories of claims in one application. See WIPO PCT Administrative Instructions, ANNEX B, PART 2. The Examiner provided no evidence showing that the pending claims lack the same or corresponding special technical features.

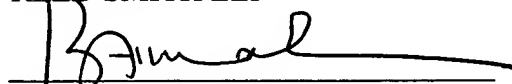
Further, the examining division has already found during the international proceedings of the above National Stage application that claims 1-58 fulfill the Unity of Invention requirement under PCT Rule 13.2. See Form PCT/IPEA/409.

Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that the subject matter of the pending claims 1-58 are sufficiently related so that a thorough search for the subject matter of one group of claim(s) would necessarily encompass a search for the other groups of claims. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that all the claims can be searched and examined without any serious burden to the Examiner.

It is further submitted that in view of the fees charged for filing of divisional patent applications, and prosecuting and maintaining the resulting patents place an undue burden on the Applicant, which justifies that any restriction or election requirement be clearly supported and made according to the patent examining procedure.

Based upon the above remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this restriction requirement and early allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that a telephone conference with Applicant's attorney would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,
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